

For Immediate Release

Contact: For questions about your state's delegates, alternates or selection process, please contact your state selection administrator: Ms. Laurie Thake at (775) 687-9224 or Ithake @doe.nv.gov. For general information about the United States Senate Youth Program, please contact Program Director Rayne Guilford at 800-425-3632 or rguilford@hearstfdn.org. Also see www.ussenateyouth.org.

Nevada Students Selected for United States Senate Youth Program -- Students Headed to Washington, D. C. and to Receive \$5,000 Scholarship--

Senators Harry Reid and Dean Heller today announced the names of the two Nevada students who have been selected as delegates to the 52nd annual United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) that will be held March 8 – 15, 2014 in Washington, D.C. Madison Eckert of Reno and Garrett Kalt of Fallon were chosen from across the state to be part of the group of 104 student delegates who will attend the program's 52nd annual Washington Week.

The USSYP was created by Senate Resolution 324 in 1962 and has been sponsored by the Senate and fully funded by The Hearst Foundations since inception. Originally proposed by Senators Kuchel, Mansfield, Dirksen and Humphrey, the impetus for the program as stated in Senate testimony was "to increase young Americans' understanding of the interrelationships of the three branches of government, the caliber and responsibilities of federally elected and appointed officials, and the vital importance of democratic decision making not only for America but for people around the world."

Each year this extremely competitive merit-based program brings 104 of the most outstanding high school students — two from each state, the District of Columbia and the Department of Defense Education Activity — to Washington, D.C. for an intensive week-long study of the federal government and the people who lead it. The overall mission of the program is to help instill within each class of USSYP student delegates more profound knowledge of the American political process and a lifelong commitment to public service. In addition to the program week, The Hearst Foundations provide each of the 104 student delegates with a \$5,000 undergraduate college scholarship with encouragement to continue coursework in government, history and public affairs. Transportation and all expenses for Washington Week are also provided by The Hearst Foundations, as stipulated in S.Res.324; no government funds are utilized.

Madison "Maddi" Eckert attends Reno High School and serves as the student liaison to the Washoe County School District Board of Trustees She is the Senior Class vice president and is actively involved with the Hugh O'Brien Youth Leadership Program, several community organizations, and has received the President's Volunteer Service Award. Maddi plans a career focused on politics and international affairs.

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Garrett Kalt attends Churchill County High School and serves as the Student Body president. He has held an elected position on the Student Council every year at Churchill County High School, and is also actively involved with the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership Program, and several other community organizations. Garrett recently received the President's Volunteer Service Award for completing over 100 hours of community service during his junior year. Garrett plans to pursue a career focused on politics and broadcast journalism.

Chosen as alternates to the 2014 program were Danielle Park, a resident of Reno, who attends Damonte Ranch High School and Persiana Saffari, also a resident of Reno, who attends Sage Ridge School.

The chief educational officer in each state selects the delegates after nomination by teachers and principals. This year's delegates were designated by Mr. Dale Erquiaga, Superintendent of Public Instruction.

While in Washington the student delegates will attend meetings and briefings with Senators and Congressional staff, the President, a Justice of the Supreme Court, leaders of cabinet agencies, an Ambassador to the United States and top members of the national media. The students will also tour many of the national monuments and several museums and they will stay at the historic Mayflower Hotel in downtown Washington, D.C.

In addition to outstanding leadership abilities and a strong commitment to volunteer work, the student delegates rank academically in the top one percent of their states among high school juniors and seniors. Now more than 5,000 strong, alumni of the program continue to excel and develop impressive qualities that are often directed toward public service. Among the many distinguished alumni are: Senator Susan Collins, the first delegate to be elected U.S. Senator; New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, the first delegate to be elected governor; Congressman Cory Gardner, the first delegate to be elected to the U.S. House of Representatives; former Chief Judge Robert Henry, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit; former Ambassador to West Germany Richard Burt, and former Presidential Advisors Thomas "Mack" McLarty and Karl Rove. Additional notables include former Lt. Governor of Idaho David LeRoy, former President of the Progressive Policy Institute Robert Shapiro, military officers, members of state legislatures, Foreign Service officers, top congressional staff, healthcare providers and university educators.

Members of the USSYP 2014 52nd annual Senate Advisory Committee are: Co-Chairs: Senator Jon Tester of Montana and Senator Bob Corker of Tennessee; Advisory Committee: Senator Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut, Senator Joe Manchin III of West Virginia, Senator Patty Murray of Washington, Senator Tom Udall of New Mexico, Senator Kelly Ayotte of New Hampshire, Senator John Hoeven of North Dakota, Senator Richard Shelby of Alabama and Senator David Vitter of Louisiana. Each year, the Honorary Co-Chairs of the program are the Vice President of the United States and the Senate Majority and Minority Leaders.